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Mitchell, John

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## Vocational Rehabilitation of Crippled Industrial Workers

By JOHN MITCHELL

Chairman New York State Industrial Commission

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OUT of this Great War, which we are fighting to make democracy forever safe in the world, is emerging a new valuation of human life, particularly of the human unit in industry.

"One thing this war has taught us: men are not so cheap as we once thought them," United States Surgeon General Rupert Blue well says: "Human life and human efficiency are the two most precious things on earth."

Because the War calls for the utmost fitness of the military and industrial armies, we must insist upon all measures for conserving their safety, health and efficiency.

Because war is so wasteful of man-power, national self-preservation requires the conservation and utilization of every ounce of human skill and effort, hitherto shamefully neglected.

Because war is by its very nature destructive, we must direct our best talent and resources toward human reconstruction—reconstruction that will aid in the immediate prosecution of the War as well as in facing the after-war tests of America's self-reliance and greatness.

And, meeting all these considerations of national security, is the proposed law for the rehabilitation, reëducation and re-employment of industrial cripples.

We already have a well-manned, well-administered system of Federal vocational education in which the work is carried on and the cost shared jointly by the national Government and the several States. The reëducation of crippled industrial workers will require merely an application of the same principle, an enlargement of the scope, and full utilization of the machinery already provided by law.

The rehabilitation of disabled soldiers and sailors into skilled workmen is distinctly a *national* duty. This has recently been recognized by Congress. The salvaging of workers disabled through industrial accidents and occupational disease is a work of human conservation falling upon *both state and nation*. It

*Reprinted from report of Fifth Biennial Conference of Catholic Charities, Catholic University, Washington, Sept. 15-18, 1918.*

comes naturally within the province of the existing Federal Board for Vocational Education and on the plan of state and federal coöperation.

#### WAR'S DOUBLE-EDGED HAZARDS.

The present War, more than all others in history, is an industrial war. It is being fought by the vast armies of workers far behind the lines quite as directly as by the men in the front trenches. Food, munitions, clothing, ships—supplies of every description—are vitally essential in carrying on to a successful conclusion this conflict of mighty forces. The services of several persons in mill, mine, field, factory, and transportation are needed to sustain the efforts of each soldier. It is a struggle of whole nations; not of military armies alone. The outcome will be determined largely by our industrial strength.

And the hazards of war, the destructiveness of war, are not—as we have been accustomed to imagine—confined to submarine areas and No Man's Land. A grim toll of life and limb is taken daily in the munitions plants, in the mines and factories, in the stokeholds and on the railroads.

Under the huge pressure of war needs, death and injury among working men and women in the course of their employment are increasing to an alarming extent. It is a fact of compelling significance that the War's casualties fall quite as heavily upon the men in overalls as upon the men in khaki. It is said to be as safe to serve near the guns and gas in Flanders fields, as to serve near the whirring wheels and high explosives in some industries at home!

To those who are fated to make the supreme sacrifice of life itself, Society—the very democracy for which our people are waging this war—is in simple justice bound to provide the assurance that suffering and want shall not be visited upon widows or children or other dependents.

To those who are maimed or disabled in her service, the country must extend not merely the protection of disability compensation but also the helping hand of rehabilitation through measures that will, as far as possible, restore the cripple to normal life and useful self-sustaining occupation.

We owe at least this much to those who have been wounded in battle. We owe fully as much to the larger army of crippled victims of injuries in the industries.

This double obligation imposed by war upon the nation and the States was voiced last spring by representatives of the As-

sociation for Labor Legislation at the congressional hearings in Washington in urging that legislation for vocational rehabilitation include *both* crippled war veterans and disabled industrial workers.

"It seems a shame," it was said, "that we need to send our boys to the other side to be shot to pieces before we provide these means for educating them. We are learning, of course, a great many things with reference to the care of the industrial workers from this experience in wartime. I think we should not forget that very many of those who are working in the munitions plants in this country today will be in a pretty direct sense victims of this war; that they will suffer serious injuries as a result of explosions and the result of trade poisons, which will make them unfit to win a livelihood as self-respecting citizens in the future, unless there be extended to them facilities for rehabilitation."

The soldier or the sailor who suffers disability has since been provided for generously, fearlessly, democratically by our government.

When the United States entered the War, and it became suddenly necessary to make provision for the care of the families of the fighting men, Congress passed the most liberal law ever enacted by any country to provide separation allowances, disability compensation, death benefits, and additional voluntary insurance for its soldiers and sailors—one of the greatest and most far-reaching of all measures of social insurance.

But, recognizing that this did not fully absolve the nation of responsibility for the welfare of its fighting forces, Congress recently passed, unanimously, and President Wilson signed, a bill to provide for the vocational reeducation and rehabilitation and the restoration to civil employment of our soldiers and sailors who return from the war disabled.

The bill appropriates \$2,000,000 to carry on the work. Control of the vocational re-training is placed in the hands of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, with necessary coöperation arranged between the Vocational Board and the medical service of the Army and Navy, which restores the wounded men to physical strength, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, which administers their disability compensation; and the Department of Labor, which aids in securing reemployment for these men, suited both to their physical handicaps and their newly acquired trade skill.

These are two war measures of surpassing importance. They are a noble expression of a nation's regard for her sons

who face the hazards of battle. They are, moreover, of immeasurable significance in opening the way to a similar manifestation of national concern for those other sons—and daughters—who render essential service amid the ever-present perils of industry.

#### INDUSTRIAL CRIPPLES; A TREMENDOUS SOCIAL WASTE.

The need for vocational rehabilitation of crippled industrial workers is great. It is not only a pressing wartime need but it is a far greater *permanent* need than the work for reclaiming military cripples.

"Young able-bodied working men are losing their limbs, feet, toes, arms, fingers, and eyes by the thousands every year, and those functional losses disqualify a large number of them from following their usual occupations. They present both a great opportunity and a tremendous human appeal for vocational rehabilitation."<sup>1</sup>

Few people realize the frightful toll of injuries imposed by industry upon the working people. Each year there are more than 2,000,000 industrial accidents, resulting in loss of time, and more than 700,000 where inability to work extends through a period of at least four weeks. There are annually in industry more than 22,500 fatalities.

The magnitude of the social loss—the loss of life, money and time—as a result of accident, not to speak of the human suffering and discouragement, is vividly presented by the former Chairman of the Massachusetts Industrial Accident Board.<sup>2</sup> The death, accident and casualty statistics, when brought together in a report, suggest the frightful carnage of modern warfare, although coming from the industries of a single State. They are illustrative of what is happening in all industrial States today. In my own State, New York, accidents are being reported at the rate of 325,000 a year, every year.

In Massachusetts, in the year ending June 30, 1917, 174,372 industrial accidents were reported, and \$5,000,000 was paid out for compensation and for medical treatment for injured workmen. One man was killed in industry in every six working hours

<sup>1</sup>Memorandum submitted by Dr. Little to Joint Congressional Committee on Education and Labor: Hearings on Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Soldiers and Sailors, page 85.

<sup>2</sup>Dudley M. Holman, addressing the recent conference in Boston of the Committee on Social Welfare of the National Association of Cotton Manufacturers.

during the same period, while some man or woman was injured more or less severely every minute.

Throughout this same year 6,000 industrial workmen were at any given time idle as a result of industrial accidents, and the loss caused by this waste of time amounted to more than \$6,000,000 in lost wages to the workers and \$7,000,000 paid by the employers in compensation insurance premiums. The total economic loss from industrial accidents in Massachusetts alone is estimated conservatively at \$15,000,000 a year.

"We are killing and maiming more people in industry annually than we will call to the colors in the first three drafts," says Mr. Holman. "Every worker is an economic asset whose value increase or decreases in proportion to his productivity. He becomes a liability when he is rendered unable to work from any cause, whether that cause is accident or preventable trade disease.

"This unnecessary social waste is a large contributing factor in the increased cost of living. Through our failure to grapple with this problem, a large army of producers become an army of consumers, and money which should go into dividends and profits, increased wages and salaries, is expended for these unfortunates, who have been tolerated too long.

"There is serious doubt if we can meet the requirements thrown upon us by this world war if we do not at once begin to stop this waste."

And he points out that although a few scattering private experiments have been made, we have not yet in operation a single adequately equipped repair shop, where we can reëducate the crippled in industry.

There are in the United States at the present time at least 100,000 victims of industrial injuries calling to us for this kind of training to make them again productive members of society and open again to them the door of self-support, self-respect and opportunity. And every year, on conservative estimates, this number of permanently incapacitated is being increased at the startling rate of 11,250!

Contrast this with the number of disabled veterans from the military forces who will avail themselves of vocational rehabilitation. Official estimates based upon the experience of Canada, our neighbor to the north, indicate that only about one per cent of the men sent overseas will be affected by the new federal plan for restoring the disabled to health, vocational reëducation and a job. If that holds true among the American forces it will

mean 10,000 military cripples to be cared for out of every million men "over there." At that rate it would take ten years of fighting, employing a million men each year, to swell the sum total of disabled soldiers and sailors so as to equal our present army of industrial cripples already waiting to be reclaimed, already too long neglected in our factory and munitions communities, our mining districts and railroad centres.

#### THE HUMAN SCRAP PILE OF INDUSTRY.

What this neglect means to the blameless victim of hazardous employment is a tragic story. It is a story that has come close to the personal experience of many of us.

The industrious workman—so frequently it is the sole breadwinner of the family!—is caught in a serious accident. After the long battle against death at the hospital, he emerges restored to health and strength, but crippled for life; so maimed in limb or eyes that he can never again perform his accustomed tasks. For a time workmen's compensation comes to the aid of the family. Then these benefits are exhausted. The little savings of years are swallowed up. The unfortunate man is entirely cut off in the prime of manly vigor, from the work he knows so well how to do. He sees no occupation open to him unless it is the pathetic makeshift of the penny peddler or the tin-cup mendicant. His special knowledge of working processes gone to waste, he sinks under the weight of his misfortune, discouraged, despairing, watching with agony the black shadow of destitution fall over his home.

How different the picture if there were vocational rehabilitation to step in, take this workman right at his beside in the hospital, encourage him to a fresh interest in activity, guide him through a course of highly practical training in some trade that doesn't require his missing leg, or arm, or eyes, and finally place him once more in a useful paying job!

We have made great advances toward fulfilling our social responsibility to workers injured in the course of duty by adopting workmen's compensation laws in four-fifths of the States and for the more than half million civilian employees of the Federal Government. We are making it possible for the injured to have medical care and protection for themselves and their families against want for a period during which the worker may recover and return as well as ever to his job.

We have gone far, to use President Wilson's recent expres-

sion, in substituting "for the cold letter of the law, the warm and wholesome tonic of humane statute."

The principle of workmen's compensation is now well settled in our national policy. Beyond that, what?

We are casting valuable workers needlessly on the scrap heap. In my experience as Chairman of the New York State Industrial Commission, which administers the workmen's compensation law, I am brought face to face every day with the tragic consequences of our failure to make some provision for restoring to economic usefulness, self-assurance, and renewed interest in living, those victims of industry whose injuries have maimed or disabled them beyond all possibility of returning to their usual occupations.

The Industrial Insurance Commission of the State of Washington, with the approval of the Governor, in appealing to Congress for "the passage of such legislation as will not only provide for the cripples who shall return from the War but also for that other great army of cripples who are the victims of our industrial life," has referred to these conditions in the following words:

"In the administration of the workmen's compensation law of this State we are daily confronted with the necessity of some provision whereby those industrial cripples may be restored to conditions enabling them to again take their place in the industrial life of the State—conditions which will make them again self-supporting and producing factors in industrial life rather than a burden to themselves and upon society."

"Those of us," said Commissioner Little of the United States Employees' Compensation Commission, "who have been dealing in compensation problems have lost confidence in monetary considerations alone doing much for disabled people. We must be more constructive in our methods."

And Dr. Little added: "One of the most pitiful things in my observation of American life is the way in which we have wasted the young manhood of our country and neglected to salvage the results of our industries. For the last twenty years it has been my work, in three large American cities, to have something to do with the problems of dependency, and therefore to deal with the question and the problem of the victim of industry and how we can help him; and it is one of the most difficult problems that citizens, or groups of citizens, undertake to solve; and the principal reasons that we have made no progress was because there was no broad or comprehensive scheme de-

veloped by any municipality, county or state, or by the national government, to deal with the problem; and we are creating a large class of dependent people who not only are dependent themselves, but who affect their families and the groups of life that they touch; they are increasing the ranks of that unknown number of floating, casual workers and the mendicants in the streets of our cities; whereas a considerable percentage of them might be educated, or reeducated and trained, and made productive units of society."

I know it would be superfluous to lay further emphasis here upon what the charities of America are themselves encountering every day in the way of ruined lives, blighted homes, and empty cupboards that follow in the wake of industrial injuries that have permanently incapacitated the breadwinners of the families.

The able Chairman of the California Industrial Accident Commission<sup>3</sup> has pointed out that "the problem of the cripple is in part the problem of poverty and the problem of poverty is essentially a state problem."

He touches upon a most important consideration in favor of extending our nation-wide plans for vocational rehabilitation so as to include all cripples, whether military or industrial, when he asserts that the need for institutions to rehabilitate wounded soldiers and sailors will come to an end within a year after the war ends, while industry will continue to turn out an army of cripples needing such care every year as long as the world lasts. Urging that "all such institutions should be as enduring as the need for them," he says, "throw them open to the extent of their capacity."

"Work," says the Vocational Secretary of the Invalided Soldiers' Commission of Canada,<sup>4</sup> "work is the salvation of our disabled men."

That these men can be trained for suitable trades at which they can earn the full standard of wages is being demonstrated by the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men in New York City. "Working on the keyboard of a monotype machine," for example, the public is reminded, "is just as easy a process for the man with wooden legs as for the men with flesh ones." This Institute has been carrying on illuminating experimental work in the field of restoring industrial cripples

<sup>3</sup>A. J. Pillsbury, in address on "The Problem of the Permanently Crippled," before the California Conference of Social Agencies at Santa Barbara.

<sup>4</sup>T. B. Kidner: Congressional Hearings on Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Soldiers and Sailors, page 47.

to self-confidence and self-support. An important feature of its activity is the placement of the retrained men. And by actual demonstration it is convincing employers that in this time of relative shortage of labor, they cannot afford to pass up the re-educated cripple who is efficient, if placed in the right job.

Back of the lines, our Government is repairing mountains of shoes worn out by the soldiers in the trenches, and great piles of motor truck radiators broken down in the strenuous service at the front. If this is wise economy to aid in the struggle, surely it is worth our while to repair and restore to further service the human beings who have been worn and broken in the industries.

#### THE NATION AWAKENING TO ITS DUTY.

Every consideration of individual and social well-being, coupled with the stern war necessity of utilizing every possible ounce of labor, particularly skilled labor power, have moved public officials, leaders of public opinion, medical, labor, and employers' organizations and social service associations to unite in a most imposing appeal to Congress not to delay any longer in adopting plans for reclaiming the vast human and economic "waste" due to disabilities, and for restoring the cripples to usefulness.

In urging the passage of the bill for the rehabilitation of disabled soldiers and sailors, the United States Commissioner of Labor Statistics<sup>5</sup> said:

"I regard this legislation as a war measure and it needs to go through with a bang, the sooner the better for all concerned. But I may say that my principal interest is for the industrial cripple, because the industrial cripple is so vastly more important than the military cripple. Even when we get into this war, as we inevitably will get into it, with not less than a million and probably something like 2,000,000 before a great while, our cripples as a result of military operations will not equal the cripples of industry."

The manufacturers of this country themselves realize that it would be an unfair burden upon private charity, as well as a most unfortunate disposition of the problem to leave the wounded men to shift for themselves, according to a representative of the National Association of Manufacturers<sup>6</sup> addressing the Senate and House committees in behalf of the rehabilitation bill.

<sup>5</sup>Dr. Royal Meeker: Congressional Hearings, page 107.

<sup>6</sup>Mr. F. W. Keough: Congressional Hearings, page 94.

"To force them to become public charges is obviously as unfair to them as it is to the community," he asserts. "The consensus of opinion among manufacturers seems to be that the fairest way of rehabilitating wounded men is by helping them to help themselves."

Organized labor in this country strongly urges that the crippled victims of industrial accidents be given the same opportunities for restoration to health and self-support in useful occupations as have been provided for the men who have been crippled by war. At the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor at St. Paul, the report of the Executive Council, which was unanimously endorsed, declared that "every worker has the right to compensation for physical injury or disease occasioned in the course of production," and "every worker who has been injured or disabled in industry has the *additional right* to opportunities for rehabilitation in order that he may receive the necessary assistance or training to enable him to be self-sustaining."

The American Association for Organizing Charity refers to the appalling extent of permanent incapacity through industrial accidents, saying: "It is unnecessary to indicate to Charity Organization Society workers the hardships and often the demoralization which follow. We realize how great is the need for constructive reëducation."

The Consumers' League of Eastern Pennsylvania, the State Medical Society of California, and the American Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men, appealing for such legislation, all emphasize the tremendous and needless human waste, the lowered industrial efficiency of the nation and the great economic loss that result from our failure to provide rehabilitation and reconstruction for those who are handicapped by industrial accidents. And the California State Conference of Social Agencies says *all* cripples should be included in these plans, "however they may have received their injuries, whether in war, in industry, or by personal injury."

In a recent paper on "The Nation's Neglect—The Failure to Reconstruct and Rehabilitate the Wounded in Industry," the Chief Surgeon of the Bethlehem Steel Company<sup>7</sup> pointed out that it has taken a crisis such as the present to awaken the people to the necessity of such work, declaring that the care of the wounded in industry is a matter for federal legislation.

<sup>7</sup>Dr. Loyal A. Shoudy, at Sixth Conference of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons, Harrisburg, Pa., April 9, 1918.

Speaking before the last annual Industrial Welfare and Efficiency Conference held under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, a member of the staff of the Surgeon General's Office in the War Department<sup>8</sup> urged that our vocational rehabilitation plans should not stop with the military cripples but should include "the disabled industrial soldier" as well.

"The great economic loss of man power which the world is sustaining as a result of the war," he declared, "is forcing every nation to salvage all disabled men and to train them to again become useful and efficient units of society. . . . To meet the fierce economic pressure in supplying the necessities of life, as well as the necessities of war, we must plan to utilize every ounce of energy and working ability in our men and women, be they whole or disabled."

During the consideration of this legislation just preceding the enactment of the soldiers' and sailors' rehabilitation law, a memorandum was submitted to the Congressional committee by Dr. R. M. Little of the Federal Employees' Compensation Commission, now Director of the American Museum of Safety. This memorandum states so concisely and impressively the necessity of including the rehabilitation of industrial workers in the nation's program of war legislation that I wish to quote from it. Here are a few pertinent extracts:

"As national interest is aroused in behalf of disabled soldiers and sailors, and comprehensive and effective plans will be made to restore them, as far as possible, to normal independent life, wise statesmanship should extend the benefits of these plans and methods to include the even larger number of disabled working men who likewise are scattered all over our country. They likewise constitute a problem of national proportions, and of fundamental importance to the economic and social welfare of our nation, not only after the War but during the prosecution of the War."

"No effective and comprehensive plan for the rehabilitation of the victims of industry has ever been established in our country. The problem has been neglected by cities, counties, states, and the Federal Government. Private agencies have dealt with the problem, but their efforts have been largely abortive because the task of rehabilitating the handicapped is so difficult, involved

<sup>8</sup>Major Harry E. Mock of the Surgeon General's Office, War Department, Washington, D. C., was company physician for Sears, Roebuck & Company, and Secretary of the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons.



and comprehensive, that private efforts have usually been broken down by the size of the undertaking. Disabled working men are largely left to shift for themselves, to the often inadequate assistance of their friends, and to the uncertain interest which their former employers take in them."

"Those interested in the handicapped have learned that comparatively few of the victims of industry ever rise above their misfortunes through their own courage and initiative. On the other hand, the great majority are unable to secure remunerative employment; become discouraged; become a burden on their friends and society. Many deteriorate in character and are further weakened by misguided benevolences until, their misfortune becoming their capital, thousands of them become paupers and beggars."

"Most of the victims of industry, if properly assisted just after their disabilities begin, can be rehabilitated and restored to civil employment as productive units of society."

"The Vocational Rehabilitation bill should be extended to provide for the victims of industry, and make available for them the organization, schools, teachers, methods and appliances and knowledge of industry, which will be developed for the disabled soldiers and sailors."

It is particularly emphasized in this memorandum that—

"As the work for the soldiers and sailors will presumably be completed within a few years after the close of the war, it would be a national misfortune to permit such an organization as the bill creates to fall into disuse when there are already in our country more than 100,000 victims of industry who need the very same rehabilitation which the nation provides for the soldiers and sailors."

It may be added that the most satisfactory type of vocational instruction for soldiers and sailors can only be secured when a definite future is offered for men and women to go into this highly specialized branch of teaching.

The old attitude of society toward the returned soldier, particularly the disabled soldier, is gone. It has been replaced by a new and finer assumption of national responsibility. It has been well said that "the day of the blind man with the tin cup begging for pennies and perhaps merely wearing the remnants of a military uniform is gone by."

The new day that is dawning also in the treatment of industrial veterans is heralded in well-chosen words by Congressman Madden of Illinois. "Our first care," he says, "should be to

rehabilitate all the man power which has been partially destroyed in the country's service, whether in the industrial side of the war or at the front."

United States Senator Kenyon of Iowa declares that such legislation for crippled workers "must come and come before long."

United States Senator Hollis of New Hampshire, a member of the Senate Committee which favorably reported the bill for the rehabilitation of military cripples, writes that he thoroughly sympathizes with the proposal to have industrial cripples added to the list of men who are to be helped under this measure, saying: "After we have taken care of the army and navy cripples, I shall be glad to devote my best efforts to have the provisions of the bill extended to industrial cripples."

And Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia, Chairman of the Committee, has also expressed himself to the same effect, adding that if every member of the Senate and the House of Representatives could be impressed with the need of rehabilitating crippled industrial workers as the Joint Committee on Education and Labor is impressed, there would be scarcely a dissenting vote upon it in Congress.

#### MAKE USE OF EXISTING MACHINERY.

This enlightened legislation will require no departure from well-established, well-tested national principles or institutions. The way has been paved; the machinery provided. All that is needed is an extension of the facilities already in existence.

Now that our full duty has been done toward the military veterans, we shall fall far short of fulfilling our equal obligation to those who serve in the industrial line of defense if we do not take the next step promptly.

The rehabilitation of crippled soldiers and sailors is distinctly a matter of national responsibility. The vocational rehabilitation of crippled industrial workers is a matter in which the nation and the states have a joint responsibility.

It will require merely a simple amendment to the soldiers' and sailors' rehabilitation law based upon the principle and the method of the Smith-Hughes Act which established the Federal Board for Vocational Education. This amendment would authorize the Vocational Board to make an arrangement with the States upon a "50-50" basis for the vocational rehabilitation of their own victims of industry.

The same facilities which the Vocational Board is providing

and establishing for the disabled soldiers and sailors could largely be used for the disabled workers. Perhaps in some States additional courses would have to be provided, but the experience and facilities developed for the soldiers and sailors could readily be utilized for establishing on a sound basis the necessary schools, teachers, courses, methods and technique in each State availing itself of the act.

To meet this problem effectively the Federal Government must take the lead. It must provide an adequate system of administration, and that is already available through the Board for Vocational Education.

From the director of this Board has come one of the most compelling statements yet made in favor of rehabilitation and re-training for industry.

"We have come to realize that this country has from its foundation, as have all other countries, sent the disabled men of industry, the victim of industry, to the waste pile," says Dr. Prosser. "We have had so much cheap human labor to use that we have neglected our cripple and our handicapped in the most indifferent way. The people of this country are determined that this shall not be done again, at least with the men who come from the War.

"Anything that can be done for a man through vocational rehabilitation that turns him from a wreck and a dependent and a social parasite into an orderly, happy, and successful wage-earning citizen will not only make for the safety of the country, but increase the value of our human resources far beyond the cost of the training."

And Dr. Prosser has declared emphatically that every last dollar invested in such rehabilitation of crippled men will be returned to the country fifty times over through the increased value of those men as citizens and as workers.

Belgium understood this. Brave, devastated but unconquerable little Belgium was the first to recognize the justice and the economic gain of saving wounded workers from dependency and despair.

Before the War started the authorities of the Belgian province of Hainaut "decided that men crippled in industrial accidents should not be supported in idleness if they could be so trained as to restore their productive capacity. So they established in Charleroi a trade school for maimed men. As every one knows Charleroi laid right in the path of the German invasion. But the destruction of the school and the scattering of its teach-

ers and pupils served only to disseminate the seed of its principles and experience."

This statement comes from the Director of the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men. He traces the head of the Charleroi school into France at Lyons "just about the time the Mayor of that city was trying to reconcile the desperate local need for labor with the number of returned soldiers lacking an arm or a leg but otherwise healthy and strong. These men could not be found jobs, because they were not trained for those which their physical handicap would permit them to fill."

So, with the expert assistance of this Belgian teacher the Mayor of Lyons founded the first French training school for war cripples, and this institution, now known as the *Ecole Joffre*, has since become famous.

The seed thus sown by war is rapidly spreading throughout the civilized world on soil made fertile by the waste of war.

#### LABOR CONSERVATION: A NEED ACCENTUATED BY WAR.

"We must husband our labor supply so as to satisfy the war needs of the country to the fullest possible practical extent," announced the Chairman of the United States War Labor Policies Board.<sup>9</sup>

This declaration of national purpose should enlist united support for all measures of labor conservation that are based upon sound economics, humanity, and national effectiveness in this emergency.

This war is sending across the nation a wave of realization that human life is not cheap, but dear; that labor is no longer to be exploited and cast aside, but safeguarded as our most valuable resource.

We are successfully resisting misguided and unjustifiable attempts to overthrow the protective standards of working and living built up through long years of intelligent effort—attempts that have been made under cover of "war necessity" right in the face of President Wilson's declaration to the country that no such necessity has yet appeared. We are extending and improving the protection of workmen's compensation. We are making enlightened headway toward exclusive state funds for insuring the workers adequately against the casualties of their employment. Public sentiment in this country is developing rapidly in favor of universal health insurance for wage earners, including

<sup>9</sup>Felix Frankfurter, in a public statement outlining the work to be undertaken by the Board, May 14, 1918.

maternity benefits; and my own observation, through long experience with the ravages of accident, trade disease, and sickness among working people and their families, leads me to the conviction that health insurance is even more important than workmen's compensation. As Colonel Roosevelt said recently in his Saratoga address, "There must be insurance against old age, sickness, and involuntary unemployment." And, among the measures of labor construction now pressing most urgently for action, is the development by legislation of a federal-state system for restoring to economic usefulness all workers who have been disabled by industrial accidents, trade diseases or sickness, and establishing on an adequate, permanent basis the machinery for placing them again in productive employment.

National justice to those who serve to the utmost in the industrial army, national strength through the conservation of man-power and woman-power, national necessity for the reclamation and development of skilled workers—all demand that legislation for rehabilitating industrial cripples be enacted immediately, so that broken bodies may be transformed into skilled workers with a new zest for living and that the appalling waste of precious human material may be prevented.

What we are doing to conserve human life and power in a military sense, we should hasten to do in an industrial sense.

Every individual, every organized body of citizens having at heart the nation's well-being, both in war and in peace, should actively impress upon Congress the necessity and the desirability of passing at the December session an amendment to the soldiers and sailors vocational rehabilitation act, extending its enlightened provisions to the workers who are crippled in industry. It is not given to all of us to serve at the battlefield, but here at home we may at least devote ourselves to the practical and necessary service of arousing public understanding and demand for the measures of preparedness through which food and munitions may be made available to sustain the countries that are fighting for democracy, and while thus engaged we must not forget to safeguard, strengthen and conserve to the utmost the industrial army which is so loyally supporting the fighting forces.

N.B.—Since the above was written there has been introduced in the United States Congress a measure known as the Smith-Bankhead Bill (Senate 4922; H.R. 12880) providing for the vocational rehabilitation, reëducation and reëmployment of industrial cripples along the lines set forth in this paper.—J. M.



**END OF  
TITLE**